



# THE NEW JERSEY ITALIAN AND ITALIAN AMERICAN HERITAGE COMMISSION



## New Jersey-Italy Business Conference

The Commission and the New Jersey World Trade Council collaborated on organizing an important conference named "ITALY – Capitalizing on Commercial Opportunity and a Rich Cultural Heritage" on May 17<sup>th</sup> in Whippany. This business conference was the 34<sup>th</sup> Annual NJ World Trade Conference that educated the public on the state of business relations between Italy and the State of New Jersey. The Commission participated as an organizer in order to present on the Italian culture and to provide historical background on the



Port Authority Chairman Anthony Coscia



Attendees with Dr. Gilda Rorro (far right)



Commissioners Davino and Paragano (left)



From L to R: Executive Director Marinzoli, Italian Vice Consul Toschi, Commission Chairman Paragano, NJWTC Director Ferris and Italian Consul General Bandini.

contributions of Italians to the world of business and finance.

The event attracted over 250 Italian American business leaders, representatives of Italian companies and representatives of NJ-based corporations. The conference included addresses from business leaders, government officials and panels on specific topics related to trade between Italy and New Jersey.

The Government of Italy was represented by Consul General Antonio Bandini, Vice Consul Paolo Toschi, Director of the Italian Trade Commission Roberto Luongo and the Honorary Vice Consul of Italy Dr. Gilda Rorro. The New Jersey Government was represented by the Secretary of the Commerce Commission Virginia Bauer, Deputy Chief of Staff to the Governor Joseph Fiordaliso and the Chairman of the Port Authority Anthony Coscia, Esq.

Other speakers included Mr. Ira Rosenberg of Sills Cummis; Vice President Dean Barcelona of

Ferraro Foods; Vito Racanelli, the foreign editor of Barrons; NJ economist Dr. Joseph Seneca; Deputy Assistant Secretary of US Commerce Eric Stewart; Bank of America economist Gary Bigg; and Fabio Marazzi of MRZP.

This event was made possible by the sponsorship of Bank of America (originally founded by an Italian citizen in California); the law firm Sills Cummis Epstein & Gross; Ferraro Foods; and other not-for-profits, corporations and government agencies.

Major topics addressed included the level of trade between NJ and Italy; the cross-over between cultural heritage and commercial relations; and strategies to enter the Italian market.

The Commission would like to thank its partners at the NJ World Trade Council, Commissioner Mauro Checcio and Advisors Michael Genevrino and Daniella Puglielli for organizing this event.



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### Chairman's Message

As we embark on the Commission's fourth year of operation, I would like to express my gratitude to our many volunteers throughout the State. Serving as Commissioners, Committee Members or as advisors, these women and men

have worked tirelessly to help create a variety of programs and projects promoting the Italian Heritage in New Jersey.

Thus far, the Commission has worked with many NJ and Italian organizations, groups, universities, schools and agencies to implement the following in the past 2 years:

- Italian Heritage Curriculum in Eleven school districts in NJ
- 1<sup>st</sup> Statewide Congress for Italian American Organizations



Commission Chairman Larry Paragano

- Six co-sponsored university conferences at Rutgers, Seton Hall, Montclair and Camden
  - Statewide celebrations for Italian Liberation Day
  - Business conference for Italian & U.S. companies
  - Production of new film documentary
  - Publication of 6 books, journals and multimedia
- With your support, we look forward to even more this year.

### Italian Student and Teacher Conferences

In March, the Commission collaborated on two major conferences related to Italian Heritage. The first, held on March 18<sup>th</sup> at Douglass College at Rutgers University, was organized by the Italian Teachers Association of New Jersey. This student conference, known as Italian Heritage Day, brought together over 400 students from various high schools throughout New Jersey to learn and share their knowledge of opera. Students had an opportunity to listen to live opera performances and develop their own projects related to opera performances. This annual event promotes student interest in the

Italian culture and was a resounding success. Catherine Vignale of the Commission helped to organize the event with ITANJ.

The second conference was held on March 31<sup>st</sup> at Montclair State University and was organized by Commissioner Marisa Trubiano. This teacher conference was focused on the experiences of Italian women workers in the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century in New York. Similar to last year's "Teach the Teachers" conference, educators were offered professional development hours for their participation.

### Commission Upcoming Events

- **June 1, 2005**  
*Italian Art Through the Ages*  
Art Exhibition and Fund-Raiser at the Zimmerli Museum at Rutgers by the NJ Italian American Foundation
- **September 26, 2005**  
*Premiere Screening*  
Viewing and Fund-Raiser for the new film "Italians of New Jersey" by the NJ Italian American Foundation
- **October 1, 2005**  
*Phase II Curriculum Pilot*  
Launching for K-12 Grades  
New Pilot districts receiving test curriculum models
- **October 29, 2005**  
*2<sup>nd</sup> New Jersey Italian American Congress*  
Convention at Rutgers University in New Brunswick



Italian Students at Rutgers on 3/18



Italian Teachers at Montclair on 3/31





## Italian Liberation Day

On April 24<sup>th</sup>, the Commission's Italian Statewide Events Planning Committee (ISEP), chaired by Mr. Mario Marano, coordinated the celebration of Italian Liberation Day at Rutgers University. This year, the Committee honored the service and sacrifice of New Jersey's Italian American veterans and police forces in a dignified ceremony in New Brunswick. The Commission's partners for this event included the Ribera Club, the Federation of Italian American Societies, the Elizabeth Chapter of UNICO, the Ocean County United Italian American Club, the Seaside Italian American Club, the Bianchi



General Izzo receiving a Commendation from Commissioner Mario Marano

Lodge of the Order of the Sons of Police Society of New Jersey.

The event was punctuated by a series of moving speeches and poetry from former Governor Florio, Vice Consul of Italy Paolo Toschi, the Honorary Vice Consul of Italy Dr. Gilda Rorro and Cav. Alessandro Vettori of Rutgers. The highlight of the program was the keynote address given by Brigadier General Paul Izzo, who saluted the American men and women under arms and the veterans for their services.

The Commission presented commendations to General Izzo, the Italian American Police Society of NJ, the Association of Italian Carabinieri and the NJ Chapter of Italian American War Veterans.



Carabinieri Parading Italian Colors

## Curriculum Pilot Complete

The Phase I Pilot for the Curriculum is completed for the this school year. The Commission thanks the participating school districts: Verona, S.Hackensack, Discovery Charter, Hamilton, Hammonton, Old Bridge, Trenton, Toms River, Delsea, Princeton, and Bishop Guilfoyle. A Report on the Project will be issued in the Fall.

Several outstanding musical performances were provided by the Monmouth County Italian American Marching Band; opera lyricist Ms. Anna Maria Stefanelli; tenor Mr. Nino Rossano; and musicians Mr. Joseph Coco and Dr. Richard Sorrentino.

Italian Liberation Day is celebrated to honor the bonds of friendship and common sacrifices borne by Italians and Americans during the struggle to free Italy in the Second World War.

## CAVOUR'S COLUMN

The means of achieving greater coordination of projects and missions among New Jersey's Italian Americans is growing in stages. Statewide events like the commemoration of Italian Liberation Day, the Columbus Day celebrations and the various Italian festivals throughout the State continue to bring people together to remember their Heritage.



**By A. Roger  
Marinzoli**

Executive Director  
of the New Jersey  
Italian and Italian  
American Heritage  
Commission

This Column is named after Cavour, founder of "Il Risorgimento", the 1847 Italian Newspaper, which promoted Italian unity, heritage and identity.

Educational programs, like the Curriculum Program and the many Italian language programs in schools and communities are expanding and bringing the Italian culture directly to children in the school system. Public educational programs at New Jersey's universities are helping to focus the public on particular topics and are helping to add to educators' knowledge and methodologies for teaching.

The Commission's new work with the business community and the Italian Government is helping to bridge the Atlantic and building relationships between educational institutions and corporate sponsors. Pride and interest in Italian Heritage is growing – and by working together as a community, we can ensure that the Italian Americans of tomorrow will honor their past and keep their culture.



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### 4<sup>th</sup> Italian Convocation



**Dr. Phyllis Della Vecchia**

On March 19<sup>th</sup>, the Community Advisory Council (CAC) of the Commission held its 4<sup>th</sup> Italian American Leadership Convocation. The event was hosted by Camden Community College in South Jersey and the focal theme was the promotion of Italian Heritage through education. The keynote speaker was the President of Camden College, Dr. Phyllis Della Vecchia and other presentations

were provided by Dr. Gilda Rorro of the Commission, Dr. Rosa Zagari-Marinzoli of the CAC and Commissioner Barbara Lazzaro. The event was organized by Council Chairs Dr. Eileen Poiani and Mr. Frank Gargione and was coordinated by Dr. Lou Capelli and Dr. Ray Yanuzzi, the Provost of Camden Community College.

Over 50 attendees met in working sessions to discuss the various educational programs proposed and to advise the Commission on the feasibility and the implementation of these projects. The Convocation endorsed the Curriculum Project, various university and school programs and laid plans for greater community participation.

The New Jersey Institute of Italian and Italian American Heritage Studies, located at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, is the operational body of the New Jersey Italian and Italian American Heritage Commission for program implementation and administration. The Commission, located in, but not of, the New Jersey Department of Education, was created pursuant to the enactment of P.L. 2001, Chapter 343 C.18A4-42 and signed into law on in January 2002. The Institute, a 501.c.3. entity with statewide jurisdiction, is charged with providing services to the public at large, as well as public, non-profit and other public service institutions in all twenty-one counties in New Jersey

**NJ Institute of Italian and Italian American Heritage Studies**  
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